



LOS ANGELES COUNTY DISTRICT ATTORNEY'S OFFICE

STEVE COOLEY • District Attorney

CURT LIVESAY
Chief Deputy District Attorney

April 29, 2004

The Honorable William A. MacLaughlin
Assistant Presiding Judge of the Superior Court
111 North Hill Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012-3014

Dear Judge MacLaughlin:

On behalf of the Office of District Attorney, I submit this letter of objection to the proposed court closures about which we received official notice last week. Inasmuch as this office generates the criminal case filings which set in motion criminal court processes, we are disappointed that we were not invited to provide information and suggestions to assist the court in accomplishing its goal without unnecessarily adversely impacting law enforcement and public safety. In each of the courts you have decided to close, staff of this office file the cases, appear in the courts and represent the People of the community.

Severe budget constraints affect every public agency involved in the justice system. This office has suffered significant budget cuts and appreciates the need of the court to reduce its expenditures. In this climate it is essential that the ramifications of court closures be carefully considered. Personnel reassignments, information system reconfiguration and office space renovation are costly and potentially wasteful.

Specifically, the proposed reallocation of workload by closing the Huntington Park courts and sending their cases to Metro and East Los Angeles based upon felony / misdemeanor classification is unwarranted. The court's action is a disservice to a segment of the community which has been historically underserved. The burden on victims and witnesses has been unnecessarily increased. In effect, their access to the court has been curtailed. Their chance to experience justice has effectively been diminished.

This office has engaged senior experienced managers to review and evaluate your proposal. We have concluded there are rational alternatives which are more efficient, more economical and much less disruptive. Our alternatives

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recognize that your goal is to reduce expenditures and to more efficiently utilize "lock-up" facilities. Both objectives may be accomplished without so severely impacting law enforcement which is required by law to function within strict time limits. We believe our recommendations would benefit all stakeholders in the justice system.

It is respectfully requested that you accord this matter your immediate attention. Since the clerk has advised staff at Huntington Park that the last court day is Friday, June 25, with cases to be processed at Metro and East Los Angeles on Monday, June 28, we submit that time is of the essence. We desire to share our suggestions with you as soon as possible. Please call me at your earliest convenience.

Very truly yours,

STEVE COOLEY
District Attorney

By

CURT LIVESAY
Chief Deputy District Attorney

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